

SENATE BILL NO. 428

INTRODUCED BY STAPLETON

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A STATEWIDE 2-1-1 TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR ACCESS AND REFERRAL TO COMMUNITY DISASTER, EMERGENCY, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SERVICES INFORMATION; PROVIDING FOR A MONTANA 2-1-1 COMMUNITY COALITION TO SERVE IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY; PROVIDING THAT ANY AGENCY THAT SEEKS A NEW PUBLIC INFORMATION TELEPHONE LINE OR HOTLINE SHALL CONSULT WITH THE DEPARTMENT FOR USE OF THE 2-1-1 SYSTEM; PROVIDING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS AND SCOPE OF SERVICE; PROVIDING FOR A STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT; PROVIDING FOR ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES; REQUIRING BIENNIAL REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Findings -- purpose. (1) The legislature finds that the implementation of a system using a single, easy-to-use telephone number, 2-1-1, for public access to information and referral for safety, health, or human services and for information about access to services after a disaster or emergency will benefit the citizens of the state of Montana by providing easier access to available services, by efficiently connecting people with the desired service providers, and by reducing duplication of efforts.

(2) The legislature finds that a statewide 2-1-1 system will facilitate public access to information and referral for safety, health, and human services and for disaster or emergency prevention or response information and will make our state's communities safer, stronger, and better-prepared to respond to threats of domestic and international terrorism and domestic emergency situations of all natures.

(3) The purposes of [sections 1 through 10] are to:

(a) establish an implementation plan for a statewide 2-1-1 system to provide public access to information and referral for disaster, emergency, safety, health, and human services;

(b) ensure that the system is free from undue political interference and conflicts of interest;

(c) provide that 2-1-1 services are delivered by qualified and competent agencies in a manner that is fair and consistent throughout the state;

(d) establish a system that utilizes state employees, contracted services, or other methods of providing

1 services in a manner that is responsive to and respective of regional and community needs and interests as
2 funding allows; and

3 (e) ensure that funding of the statewide 2-1-1 system is provided and managed in a fiscally responsible
4 manner.

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6 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Statewide 2-1-1 system.** The dialing code of 2-1-1 is created as the
7 official state dialing code for public access to information and referral for safety, health, and human services and
8 information about access to services in the event of a disaster or emergency.

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10 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Definitions.** As used in [sections 1 through 10], the following definitions
11 apply:

12 (1) "Approved 2-1-1 service provider" means a public or nonprofit agency or organization designated
13 by the department to provide 2-1-1 services.

14 (2) "Coalition" means the Montana 2-1-1 community coalition provided for in [section 4].

15 (3) "Department" means the department of public health and human services.

16 (4) "2-1-1" means the abbreviated dialing code assigned by the federal communications commission
17 on July 21, 2000, for consumer access to community information and referral services.

18 (5) "2-1-1 service area" means an area of the state of Montana identified by the department as an area
19 in which an approved 2-1-1 service provider will provide 2-1-1 services.

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21 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Montana 2-1-1 community coalition -- advisory capacity.** (1) There
22 is a Montana 2-1-1 community coalition that will serve in an advisory capacity, as defined in 2-15-102, to the
23 department. The coalition shall assist the department in the development of a strategic plan for implementation,
24 operation, supervision, and evaluation of 2-1-1 calling statewide.

25 (2) The coalition is composed of up to ~~25~~ 20 members appointed by the governor, including:

26 (a) one representative from county government;

27 (b) one representative from local or county law enforcement;

28 (c) one representative from the Montana public service commission;

29 (d) representatives from each approved call center;

30 (e) one representative from a united way agency;

- (f) one representative from the department;
- (g) one representative from the department of military affairs, disaster and emergency services division;
- (h) one representative from an organization or agency working with Indian health services;
- (i) one representative from an organization or agency working with domestic violence and sexual assault;
- (j) one representative from an organization or agency on aging;
- (k) one representative from an organization or agency working in the mental health field;
- (l) one representative from an organization or agency working with persons with disabilities;
- (m) one representative from an organization that coordinates disaster relief delivery; and
- (n) other representatives suggested by the department.
- (3) A vacancy on the commission must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment and in a timely manner.
- (4) Members shall serve staggered 3-year terms.

NEW SECTION. Section 5. New public information services -- state agencies. Before a state agency that provides disaster, emergency, safety, health, or human services starts a new public information telephone line or hotline, the state agency shall consult with the department about using the statewide 2-1-1 system to provide public access to the information. If it is determined that the statewide 2-1-1 system can provide the public information at a lower cost than the establishment of a new telephone line or hotline and that the service fits within the scope of 2-1-1 service, the state agency shall provide funding to the statewide 2-1-1 system to provide the public information service. The funds must be deposited in the state special revenue account established in [section 8]. The funding amount must be determined based on the funds available, the nature of the information, and the expected call volume.

NEW SECTION. Section 6. Approved 2-1-1 service providers. (1) Only an approved service provider may provide 2-1-1 telephone services after July 1, 2006. The department, in consultation with the coalition, shall approve 2-1-1 service providers after considering the following:

- (a) the ability of the proposed 2-1-1 service provider to meet the national 2-1-1 standards recommended by the alliance of information and referral systems and adopted by the national 2-1-1 collaborative in October 2002;

- (b) the financial stability of the proposed 2-1-1 service provider;
- (c) the community support for the proposed 2-1-1 service provider;
- (d) the proposed 2-1-1 service provider's relationships with other information and referral services;
- (e) the proposed 2-1-1 service provider's record of providing existing 2-1-1 services; and
- (f) the proposed 2-1-1 service area.

(2) An existing 2-1-1 service provider may apply for the geographical area in which the service provider is currently approved to offer 2-1-1 telephone services.

NEW SECTION. Section 7. Scope of 2-1-1 service. (1) The statewide 2-1-1 system shall ensure provision of services in all counties of the state.

(2) The statewide 2-1-1 system must be administered by the department in consultation with the coalition. The department, in consultation with the coalition, shall approve a strategic plan for service delivery and divide the state into no more than 8 regions.

(3) The statewide 2-1-1 system shall ensure that all approved 2-1-1 service providers provide the following scope of service:

(a) provide information and referral services to each inquirer for the inquirer's designated geographic area through well-trained staff or volunteers who are knowledgeable about local resources;

(b) create and maintain a database of community resources and referrals for the service provider's designated geographic area;

(c) provide appropriate services to crisis callers, which includes stabilization or safety assessment and connection to further resources such as crisis lines, domestic violence shelters, and rape victim advocates;

(d) provide information to the department regarding 2-1-1 service usage including data on callers, service needs, and resource gaps;

(e) provide support to community and disaster and emergency services providers in the case of a disaster or emergency; and

(f) participate in any publicity plan for the statewide 2-1-1 system in Montana.

NEW SECTION. Section 8. State special revenue fund 2-1-1 account. There is a 2-1-1 account in the state special revenue fund. Money in the account may be spent only after appropriation. The 2-1-1 account must include any funding for the statewide 2-1-1 system as appropriated by the legislature or received through

private contributions and other sources. Expenditures from the 2-1-1 account may be used only for the implementation and support of the statewide 2-1-1 system. Monetary savings realized by the department when converting existing resource and referral lines to the statewide 2-1-1 system must be deposited in the special revenue account.

NEW SECTION. Section 9. Eligible activities. (1) The department shall provide for the study, design, implementation, and support of a statewide 2-1-1 system. The department may contract with one or more private organizations for any or all of the study, design, implementation, or support of a statewide 2-1-1 system.

(2) The department may provide for the following activities that are eligible for assistance from the 2-1-1 account provided for in [section 8]:

(a) creating a structure for a statewide 2-1-1 resources database that will meet the standards of the alliance for information and referral systems for information and referral systems databases and that will be integrated with local resources databases maintained by approved 2-1-1 service providers;

(b) developing a statewide resources database for the statewide 2-1-1 system;

(c) maintaining public information available from state agencies and programs that provide disaster, emergency, safety, health, or human services for access by approved 2-1-1 service providers;

(d) providing grants to approved 2-1-1 service providers for the design, development, and implementation of 2-1-1 services for its 2-1-1 service area; and

(e) providing grants to approved 2-1-1 service providers to provide 2-1-1 services on a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week basis and on an on-going basis.

NEW SECTION. Section 10. Reporting. The department shall provide a biennial report to the legislative children, families, health, and human services interim committee and to the legislature as provided in 5-11-210.

NEW SECTION. SECTION 11. PERFORMANCE OF REQUIRED FUNCTIONS. IT IS THE INTENT OF THE LEGISLATURE THAT THE FUNCTIONS REQUIRED IN [THIS ACT] BE CONDUCTED WITH EXISTING EMPLOYEES AND WITHIN EXISTING LEVELS OF FUNDING.

NEW SECTION. Section 12. Codification instruction. [Sections 1 through 10] are intended to be

1 codified as an integral part of Title 53, and the provisions of Title 53 apply to [sections 1 through 10].

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3 NEW SECTION. **Section 13. Severability.** If a part of [this act] is invalid, all valid parts that are
4 severable from the invalid part remain in effect. If a part of [this act] is invalid in one or more of its applications,
5 the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications.

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7 NEW SECTION. **Section 14. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2005.

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